

What does a 1st
class dissertation
look like?



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For under- and post-graduate students alike, just the word “ Dissertation” can send shivers down their spines and make the blood run cold in their veins. After all, dissertations are long, require extensive research and writing skills, and – worst of all – tend to carry up to 60% of your final grade. As well as this, to get a 1st class dissertation you need to score at least 70%; no pressure then.

Unfortunately there can be relatively minimum amount of guidance and help from universities about what goes into writing a 1st class dissertation, or the essential components of a high quality research piece. They tell you that you should demonstrate extensive knowledge in your chosen topic areas and relevant research methods but do little to explain what that actually looks like or give you a structure to follow.

Fortunately our site are able to help shed some light on this difficult subject and help you to walk away with the lion's share of the marks and get the highest grades:

1) Know your Aims

Before you start writing, you need to be clear on what a top quality dissertation requires: clear objectives and aims; tightly structured writing; and grammatically and syntactically correct language. The research writing must show strong evidence of critical and creative thinking and a readiness to consider the limitations of the theory applied within the research – examiners don't want you to agree with all the existing arguments, nor do they want you to disagree; you need to provide a measure argument that reasonably handles the evidence.

The introduction of your dissertation is the ideal time to clearly provide the aims and objectives of the study for the examiner to see; for example, you could use a sentence like “ the aim of this research is to find a positioning of The Body Shop brand within the consumer's mind.”

2) The importance of Research

A First class dissertation must show a real focus on the issues that are relevant to your area of study, and combine the theory and practice together with a clear statement of the problems to be researched. Therefore good dissertation writing must contain an analysis of relevant theories and models based on the demonstrably systematic and in-depth literature search.

Make sure you go that extra mile and ensure that your resources are current and relevant – DON'T recycle outdated texts and ideas. Show your examiner that you have a keen and current view of the issues you are discussing.

Good sources for literature include (but aren't limited to) textbooks, journal articles, newspapers and the news.

3) Work it through

For many degrees it is a requirement that 1st-class thesis writing should contain high quality data research. If this is true of your dissertation then make sure you adopt a critical survey approach; for example, if you are using questionnaires, you should adopt SPSS to analyse the data.

When producing descriptive thesis writing, remember that it should be critical. This does not mean that it has to be negative. It is, rather, a matter of adopting a questioning approach and trying to explain the reasons why things are as they are. It is important to show the significance of your argument and to demonstrate, interpret and explain as fully as possible why this is.

4) Don't overlook the referencing

Having polished references is a key part of a dissertation; after all, if you want the highest grades your work has to be near-publishable standards.

If you are unsure about what this form of referencing looks like you can do a quick search online or onGoogle, or get in touch with our site who have a team of professional proof-readers who can help correct and improve your referencing in your dissertation. Click here to get referencing help.

5) Write like a writer

To make sure you get the highest grades you must have a top quality writing style: avoid informality and conversational expressions; avoid excessive technical language – your writing must be clear and concise; use nouns such as “ researcher” in your writing. These words are preferable

in academic writing as they are more accurate and transparent than first person terms such as “ I” or “ me”.

If English is not your first language, it is advisable to have your dissertation proofread by a native speaker to correct grammatical mistakes before submitting it. our site can provide proofreading assistance for ESL students.

After finishing your writing, get someone to read your work in order to see what people think about the language and the ideas the paper presents. Ask them to feedback on whether they felt the writing style was clear, the arguments well balanced and whether the main aims of the study were received and understood.